

Village of Cayuga Heights
Local Law No. 2 of the Year 1987
AMENDMENT TO SIGN ORDINANCE

SECTION 17. SIGNS

The purpose of this local law is to promote and protect the public health, welfare and safety of the Village of Cayuga Heights by regulating existing and proposed indoor and outdoor signs of all types.

As used in this local law unless otherwise expressly stated:

“Sign” shall mean any material, structure or device of fixed location and stationary components which is used to advertise or promote the interests of any person or business when the same is placed in view of the general public.

“Indoor Signs” are signs inside of buildings, which are designed and placed to be read from outside the building.

“Erect” shall mean to display, relocate, place, affix or maintain any sign, and shall also include the painting of exterior wall signs.

The “face” of a building shall mean any outer surface of a building, which is visible from any private or public street or highway except the roof or roofs.

The “front” of a building shall mean that face which contains the front entrance.

“Illuminated sign” shall mean any sign illuminated directly or indirectly by electricity, gas, or other artificial light, including reflective or phosphorescent light originating from outside the body of the sign or from within or behind it.

“Projecting sign” shall mean any sign which projects from the exterior of any building.

“On premises sign” shall mean any sign related to an activity, business or profession conducted, or to a commodity or service sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located.

“Sign area” shall mean the surface area of the sign including the frame, plate or structure used to hold up any lettering or pictorial matter. In the event a sign is attached, painted or applied to the front or face of a building or is irregular in shape the area of the sign shall be taken as the area of the smallest rectangle that can be placed over the entire sign, including its lettering, devices, frame and decorative moldings along its edges, and background, if of a different color than the predominant color surrounding the sign except as otherwise provided herein. In the event that both upper case and lower case letters are used in a lettered wall

sign, the area shall be defined by the smallest rectangles that can be placed over the series of lower case letters plus the area of the smallest rectangles that can be placed over the upper case letters. In the event that a letter or letters or other pictorial matter are placed as separate units on background boards, the sign area shall be calculated as the sum of the areas of the background boards. In the case of a flat or two-sided free standing sign, the sign area is considered to be the entire surface area of one face of the sign.

“Free standing sign” shall mean any sign or sign structure not attached to the exterior of a building.

“Shopping center” or “multi-use commercial facility” shall mean any group of two or more stores for which there is provided off-street parking.

A. General Regulations

1. Any illuminated sign or lighting device shall employ only lights emitting a light of constant intensity. The lights shall be so regulated as to direction and intensity that they cause no nuisance or traffic hazard.
2. A sign may project horizontally not more than two feet from the front or face of a building.
3. Outdoor signs may be placed only on the faces of a building.
4. Only “on premises signs” as provided in this local law are permitted.
5. The maximum height of any part of a freestanding sign shall be six feet above ground level.

B. Permitted Signs in all Districts.

1. The following signs in any area of the Village are permitted without a permit:
 - a. Signs advertising the proposed sale, lease, or rental of the premises upon which the sign is located, which sign shall not exceed 4 square feet in area.
 - b. Professional nameplates that shall not exceed 2 square feet in area.
 - c. Signs denoting the name and address of the occupants of premises used for residential purposes which signs shall not exceed 1 square foot in area.
 - d. Directional (entrance/exit) signs on premises, each not exceeding 2 square feet in area and which shall not include any trademarks or names of businesses conducted or products sold.
 - e. A sign or notice, having an area of 10 square feet or less, of a public utility necessary for the direction, information, or safety of the public.
2. The following signs are permitted in any area of the Village of Cayuga Heights but they shall not be erected or maintained without a permit as provided herein:

- a. One sign and one bulletin board customarily incident to places of worship, libraries, museums, not to exceed 18 square feet and to be located on premises of such institutions.
- b. One sign not to exceed 6 square feet in area for social clubs or societies, which shall be located on the premises of such institutions.
- c. One sign of a temporary nature listing the architect, engineer, contractor, or owner may be placed on premises where construction, repair, or renovation is in progress. Such sign shall be removed immediately upon completion of the project or after a period of three years from the date of the permit, whichever comes first.
- d. Each building in a commercial zone may have one or two signs, whose total area shall not exceed 20 square feet. Said signs may be attached to or painted on the front or face of each building or one or both signs may be indoor signs. Where there are two signs they shall be attached to, painted on, or applied to the front and to the face or faces of the building in such a way that they are at an angle or not less than 90 degrees from one another.
- e. Where more than one business occupies a single building, in place of the sign restrictions in Section 2 (d), each business may have one or two signs whose total area shall not exceed 10 square feet. One or both signs may be an indoor sign.
- f. If there are more than two businesses operated on any one parcel or contiguous parcels, which parcel or parcels are under the ownership, operation, management, or control of the same person, persons, firms, or corporation, involving a shopping center or other multi-use facility, one free standing sign which shall not exceed 18 square feet shall be permitted for the parcel, parcels, development, or shopping center as a whole, regardless of the number of separate businesses operated thereon, provided that if such a sign is used, a sign of the kinds referred to in the first and second sentences of the preceding section shall not be used.
- g. Signs advertising store hours and "rules" of conduct are exempt from this local law.

C. Temporary Signs

All signs of temporary nature such as political or civic posters, and other signs of a similar nature, may be erected without a permit for a period not to exceed thirty days on premises of any property owner by the property owner; with the condition that a period of not less than eleven months shall elapse between the last day of one period of showing and the first day of the next. The maximum size shall be four square feet.

D. Application for Permit.

Application for a permit shall be made in writing by the owner of the premises in duplicate, upon forms prescribed and provided by the Zoning Officer and there shall be attached a detailed, to-scale drawing or blueprint showing a description of the construction details of the sign and showing all the lettering and/or pictorial matter composing the sign; position of lighting or other extraneous devices; a

location plan showing the position of the sign on any building or land, and its position in relation to nearby buildings or structures and to any private or public street or highway.

E. Fees.

The following fees shall be paid upon issuance of the permit:

1. Application fee of five dollars (\$5.00).

F. Procedures.

1. It shall be the duty of the Zoning Officer, upon the filing of an application for a permit to erect a sign, to examine such plans, specification, and other data submitted to him with the application, and, if necessary, the building or premises upon which it is proposed to erect the sign or other advertising structure; and if it complies with this local law, to approve the same and issue a permit.

2. If the said sign does not comply with this local law, the Zoning Officer shall immediately notify the applicant. An appeal from his decision may be made to the Board of Appeals. (Eff. 11/1/76)

3. In making any determination or decision with respect to any proposed sign, any Village officer or the Board having jurisdiction shall be guided by the general purpose of this local law and shall also consider the following:

- a. The purpose for which the sign is erected and the distance from which the sign is intended to be or can possibly be read and the character of adjacent streets. In all cases, the smallest sign which will suit the purpose shall be the guide, taking into account the legitimate commercial or other interests which are intended to be promoted by the sign, and the speed limits and traffic conditions on adjacent streets.

- b. The number of letters on the proposed sign. A sign with only a few letters need not be as large as one with many letters to be seen from the same distance.

- c. Other signs in the vicinity of the proposed sign.

- d. The character of the neighborhood. The proposed use shall not be detrimental to the general amenity or neighborhood character so as to cause a devaluation of neighboring property or material inconvenience to neighboring inhabitants or material interference with the use and enjoyment by the inhabitants of the neighboring property.

- e. The protection of the public interest and the desirability of maintaining open spaces, views and vistas insofar as possible.

- f. Any hardship imposed by this local law due to the nature of the sign, its location and its purpose.

G. Revocation of Permit and Removal of Signs

1. Any sign which advertises a business no longer in existence on the premises shall be removed by the owner of the premises upon which such sign is located as soon as the business ceases to exist.

2. No sign, whether new or existing, shall hereafter be erected or altered except in conformity with the provisions of this law. However, notwithstanding any provisions contained herein, the sign must be kept clean, neatly painted and free from all hazards, including but not limited to, holes in the sign, faulty wiring, loose fastenings and the sign must otherwise be maintained at all times in good repair and shall not be detrimental or dangerous to the public health or safety. If the Zoning Officer, or Board of Trustees, shall find that any sign violates any of the foregoing provisions or that such sign is unsafe or is an actual or imminent traffic or other hazard or danger to the public, he shall give written notice which shall specify the violations and the items requiring correction or the removal of a sign, as the case may be.

3. In the event of failure to comply with the requirements of said notice within the period required therein, the permit for such sign shall be automatically revoked and such sign shall be removed by the owner of the land on which such sign is erected.

H. Non-Conforming Signs.

Any sign which has been in existence prior to the effective date of this local law and which does not conform with the provisions and standards of this law and any amendments thereto, shall be removed within 90 days from the effective date hereof.

I. Legal Fees.

Whenever any action at law is brought to collect a sum of money, the defendant shall pay attorney's fees.

J. Violations

Failure to comply with any of the provisions of this local law shall be deemed a violation and the violator shall be liable to a fine of not more than \$50.00 for each violation, and each day's failure to comply shall be deemed a violation.

K. Validity

If any section, subsection, phrase, sentence or portion of this local law is for any reason, held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

L. Effective Date.

This local law shall take effect on the twentieth day after adoption. (11/15/87)